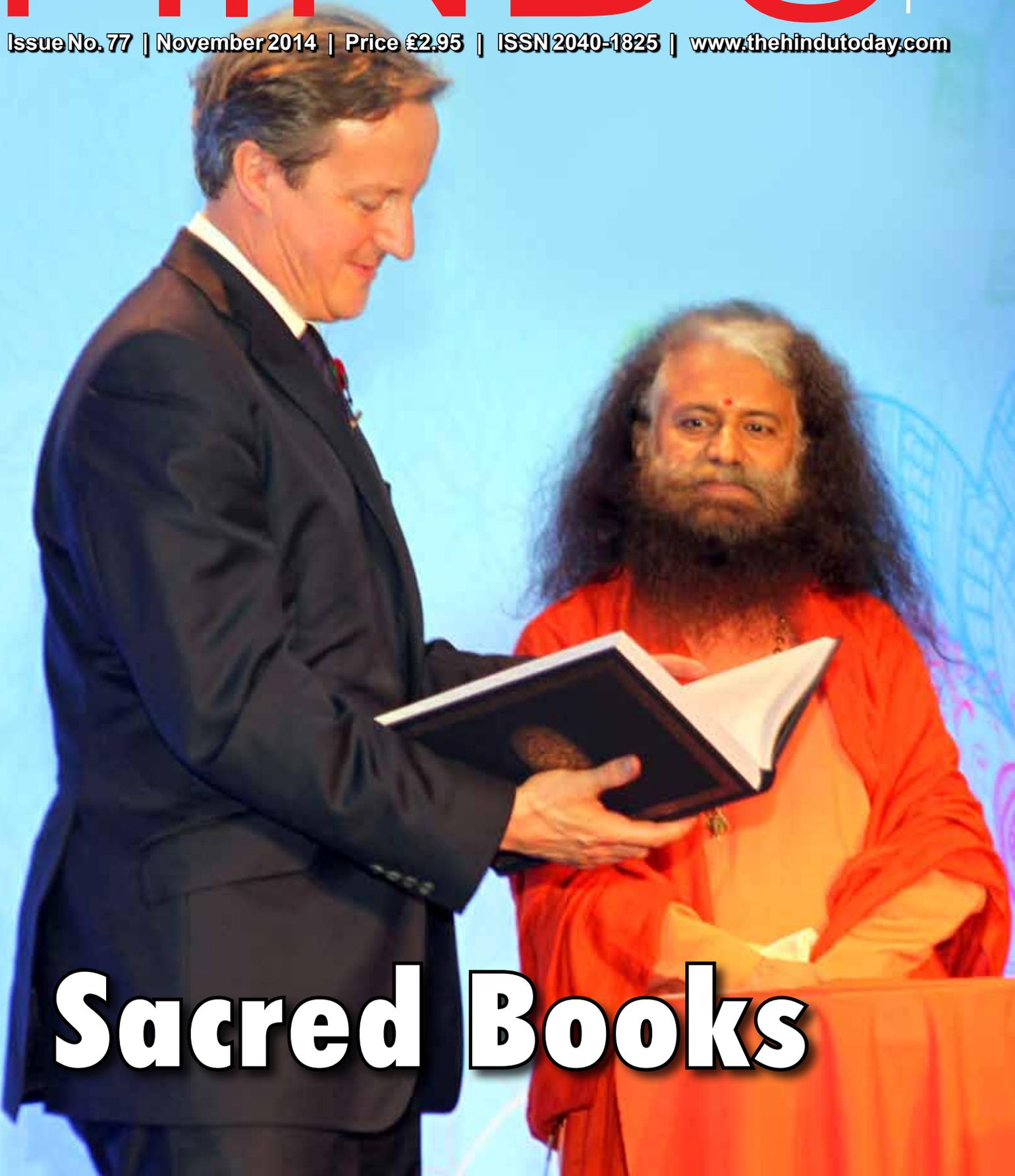


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Sacred Books

Cover story



While there have been efforts to catalogue and define Hinduism, editors of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism believe it is one of the most comprehensive guides to the religion practiced by hundreds of millions of people. The work is so long because it attempts to

categorize multiple aspects of Hindu civilization, including the spheres of art, architecture, culture, music, dance, drama, philosophy and medicine. Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, managing editor of the project said that “Hinduism is not simply theology; rather the teachings truly encompass every area of life and are inextricably linked to the cultural fabric of India” and the encyclopedia reflects that. She went to add: “Nowhere in the Hindu scriptures does one even find the word Hindu – the term used to describe these ancient yet timeless teachings is Sanatan Dharma – or eternal way of life. Hinduism emphasizes the very oneness of Creation and of paths to the Divine.

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Golden Hearts



Good-hearted people across the world join hands together to perform sewa and experience the joy of giving in its truest sense. By participating the collective endeavour, the seeds of Sewa are watered so that the acts of kindness and public service are performed more often. In gist, Sewa Day is a catalyst in making this happens

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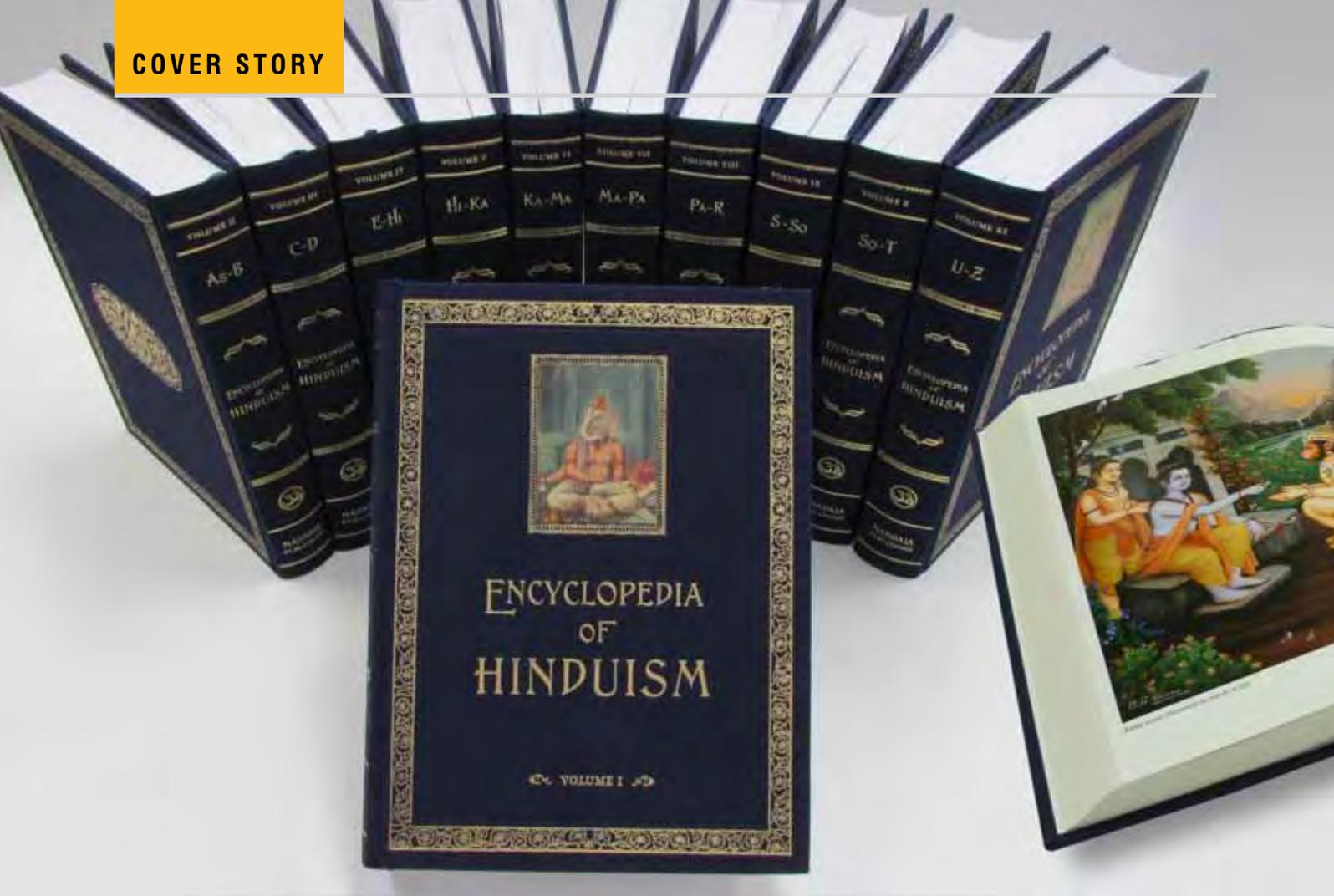
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Last week the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Center in Westminster, London, has been the venue for a memorable occasion. In the jam packed hall Prime Minister David Cameron unveiled the 11-volume *Encyclopedia of Hinduism*. Produced by the India Heritage Research Foundation the making of the encyclopedia was closed monitored by Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji. Over 1,000 scholars have worked for 25 long years to produce this single massive collection. In the recent times I know of no other mega publishing project that was undertaken on such a large scale. By all accounts it's a phenomenal literary milestone and deserves a place next to Max Müller's critical received magnum opus *The Sacred Books of the East*.

In a letter to the Duke of Argyll, Müller presciently wrote, "India can never be anglicized, but it can be reinvigorated." He went on to add: "By encouraging a study of their own ancient literature, as part of their education, a national feeling of pride and self-respect will be reawakened among those who influence the large masses of the people... In order to raise the character of the vernaculars, a study of the ancient classical language is absolutely necessary: for from it these modern dialects have branched off, and from it alone can they draw their vital strength and beauty. A new national literature will bring with it a new national life and new moral vigour. As to religion, that will take care of itself." There can be no second opinion that the German scholar had captured the real soul of melody of the Vedanta. Yes, India can never be anglicized. As Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji reminds us we are a culture that embraces all, excludes none. In our prayers, we pray *Sarve bhavantu sukhinah. Sarve santo niramaya* (May all be happy, may all be healthy.). The world would be much safer place if every human irrespective of religion thinks on those lines.

- **Shashi Karsandas Vekaria**
Editor-in-Chief, *Hindu Today*



The Sacred Books of Hinduism

Over 1,000 scholars for 25 years have worked to produce this 11-volume compendium. By all accounts it's a phenomenal literary milestone and deserves a place next to Max Müller's masterpiece.

After Max Müller's magnum opus the Sacred Books of the East, the 11-volume *Encyclopedia of Hinduism* is without doubt the most exhaustive work ever written. It won't be inappropriate to describe the event as a historic moment in the cultural history of India and for Indians and Hindus across the world. Produced by India Heritage Research Foundation, founded and chaired by Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji the compendium was launched in London by the Prime Minister of Great Britain David Cameron.

The program took place at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Center in Westminster, London, in a special function hosted by Lord Andrew Feldman, the Chairman of the Conservative Party, and organized by the Conservative Party, the Conservative Party Friends of India and Asian Media and Marketing Group, publishers of Garavi Gujarat, Eastern Eye, Asian



Indian culture in essence says: Let all the noble thoughts come from all directions. We are an inclusive culture, not an exclusive culture. We are a culture that embraces all, excludes none

Trader, Pharmacy Business and Asian Hospitality.

The function was graced by the presence of Prime Minister Cameron, His Holiness Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Founder/Chairman of India Heritage Research Foundation and President of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, India, where Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla recently visited and performed the sacred evening Aarti ceremony, many cabinet ministers, high level diplomats and eminent Indian industrialists.

Filled to capacity with more than 1,000 guests, the function began with the lighting of a special diya, in honour of Diwali. The diya (lamp) was lit by the Prime Minister David Cameron, H.H. Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Lord Feldman of Elstree, the Chairman of the Conservative Party,

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, the managing editor of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism, and Samantha Cameron, the wife of the Prime Minister. Following the lamp lighting, speeches were given by Prime Minister Cameron, Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati.

Addressing the distinguish audience

Cameron said, "This Encyclopedia is a great contribution to humanity." Later, Pujya Swamiji's said, "I love this saying of 'Let all the noble thoughts come from all directions.' I am going to use this. This is beautiful."

Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji on his part told the gathering, "Indian culture says,

'Let all the noble thoughts come from all directions.' We are an inclusive culture, not an exclusive culture. We are a culture that embraces all, excludes none. In our prayers, we pray 'Sarve





Who's Chidanand Saraswatiji?

Chidanand Saraswati is the founder of several humanitarian and environmental organizations which serve a number of causes, including: Ganga Action Parivar, to preserve and protect the Ganga River and its tributaries; India Heritage Research Foundation (IHRF), which provides education, health care, youth welfare, and vocational training; Divine Shakti Foundation, which provides education and assistance to widowed and impoverished women and children, as well as the protection of street animals in India such as cows and dogs; the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) to provide access to safe drinking water, improved sanitation and proper hygiene; and Project Hope, an umbrella organization that brings together various humanitarian and environmental organizations in times of disaster to provide both emergency relief and long-term rehabilitation. He is also interested in interfaith dialogue and currently sits on the Board of World Religious Leaders for the Elijah Interfaith Institute. He is the President and spiritual head of the Parmarth Niketan Ashram in Rishikesh, India, one of India's largest spiritual institutions, and no less is also the founder and spiritual head of the Hindu Jain Temple in Pittsburgh.

Swami Chidananda Saraswati is credited with conceiving the idea of and laying the foundation for the 11-volume Encyclopedia of Hinduism beginning in the year 1987. His biography *By God's Grace: The Life and Teachings of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati* and was published in 2012.

bhavantu sukhinah. Sarve santo niramaya.' It means, 'May all be happy, may all be healthy.' We never pray 'May Hindus be happy,' or 'May Indians be healthy.' We pray for all. Our scriptures remind us, 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' the world is one family. We pray not only for all of human life, but also for the animals, plants and nature.





Our culture teaches us – Do not only worship the Creator, but also serve the Creation! This encyclopedia was created with that in mind – service of creation, service of those who didn't know or understand or have access to these timeless truths and insights.”

Andrew Feldman, chairman of the

What Went Behind:

The Encyclopedia of Hinduism is a colossal product of more than 1,000 distinguished scholars from around the world, totaling 11-volumes and approximately 7,000 entries. It is truly a compendium of thousands of years of history, science, art, architecture, polity, religion, philosophy and culture.

Philosophy: The Encyclopedia is not limited to Hinduism as a religion, but rather provides thorough treatment of all of India's indigenous faiths, including Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism, as well as coverage of the role of the Abrahamic faiths (Islam, Christianity and Judaism) in the culture, civilization, history and history of India. A project of India Heritage Research Foundation, founded, guided and led by one of India's most revered spiritual leaders, Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, the Encyclopedia has been more than twenty years in the making and it is the first time in history that the depth and breadth of India's great spiritual culture is made available in authentic, academic and scholastic form. The International Edition of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism was presented by India Heritage Research Foundation to the President of India Pranab Mukherjeeji on the 23rd June at a huge event at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The launch in India took place on the 10th October at Vigyan Bhavan in the presence of the Vice President of India M. Hamid Ansari and Dr. Mohan Bhagwatji, the chief of the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

The Encyclopedia was previewed and blessed at a huge ceremony in India by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and hundreds of India's most revered spiritual, social and national leaders during the Maha Kumbha Mela.



Who Took Part:

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP - Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Minister for Faith

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP - Chief Whip and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP - Secretary of State for the Home Department

Shailesh Vara MP - Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Minister for the Courts and Legal Aid

Paul Uppal MP

Bob Blackman MP

What's IHRF:

India Heritage Research Foundation is an international, nonprofit humanitarian organization dedicated to research into the timeless truths and ancient wisdom of India, youth welfare and education, women's empowerment, disaster relief and more. The foundation also built three ashrams (rest houses) – the first ever to be constructed – in the sacred land of Lake Mansarovar and Mt. Kailash in Tibet.

Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji is also president of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, India, founder of Ganga Action Parivar, and co-founder of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance.

Conservative Party, said that the book, a product of research by 1,000 scholars, was a “phenomenal achievement,” adding, “The party wants to deepen and broaden our links with the British Indian community and with India and this event is one important step on our journey.

England and Wales are home to almost 700,000 people who were born in India, that's 1.2% of the population, making them the largest foreign-born group from a single country. While there have been other efforts to catalogue and define Hinduism, the editors say that their encyclopedia is one of the most comprehensive guides to the religion practiced by hundreds of millions of people.

The work is so long because it attempts to categorize multiple aspects of Hindu civilization, including the spheres of art, architecture, culture, music, dance, drama, philosophy and medicine. Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, managing editor of the project said that “Hinduism is not simply theology; rather the teachings truly encompass every area of life and are inextricably linked to the cultural fabric of India” and the encyclopedia reflects that. She went to add: “Nowhere in the Hindu scriptures does one even find the word Hindu – the term used to describe these ancient yet timeless teachings is Sanatan Dharma – or eternal way of life. Hinduism

emphasizes the very oneness of Creation and of paths to the Divine. Hinduism is not simply theology; rather the teachings truly encompass every area of life and are inextricably linked to the cultural fabric of India. So the Encyclopedia includes not only theology but also history, art, architecture, music, medicine and science, dance and drama.”

The first volume of the Encyclopedia was unveiled ceremonially by the Honourable Prime Minister and H.H. Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji. The remaining 10 volumes were then held and displayed ceremonially with the following dignitaries:

- **Mrs. Samantha Cameron**
- **Lord Andrew Feldman**
- **Mr. Ramniklal Solanki**, Editor-in-Chief Asian Media and Marketing Group (AMG)
- **Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati**
- **Mr. Gopichand Hinduja**, renowned Industrialist
- **Mr. Chandroo Kewalramani**, renowned Industrialist
- **Kalpesh Solanki**, Managing Editor, AMG
- **Shailesh Solanki**, Executive Editor, AMG
- **Lord Dolar Popat**, Lord in Waiting (HM Household) (Whip)
- **Priti Patel**, MP, Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury
- **Raoul Goff**, CEO of Mandala Earth Publications, publisher of the Encyclopedia 🌸